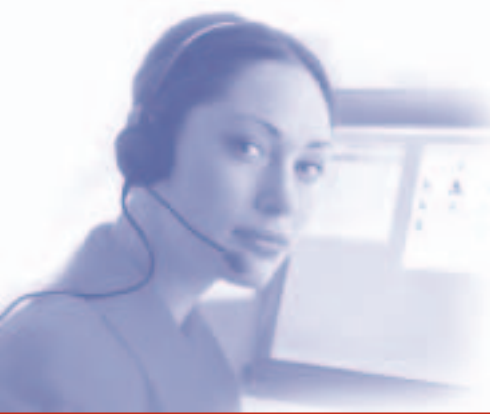




FACTSHEET

DELIVERING TECHNOLOGY ACCESS TO AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES



Neighborhood Networks centers make a positive impact in America's communities.

Workforce Development Resources

Workforce development is a process through which people identify their vocational skills, interests, and aptitudes; seek to understand and respond to changes in the world of work; set personal goals for achievement and progress; make decisions that allow them to pursue these goals; and take part in opportunities for professional growth and advancement.

Neighborhood Networks centers and their staff play multiple roles in the lives of residents. One role is that of workforce development practitioner. In that capacity, center staff seek methods to help residents achieve short- and long-term career goals.

In many ways Neighborhood Networks centers can serve as an intermediary between center users and workforce development service providers. Information, referral, and follow-along programs help match people with the services they need. Staff match center users with the necessary combination of employment and training services. Follow-along services ensure that individuals have been successful in locating programs and services within their community.

A Neighborhood Networks center could become a direct service provider of occupational skills training and placement services. Center staff should determine the scope and extent of need for center-sponsored and -supported employment services because of the significant costs associated with being a provider. Other considerations in planning to become a direct service

provider of occupational skills training and placement include the following:

- Fund development, tax status, fiduciary responsibility, governance, and insurance liability.
- Participant entrance and exit criteria.
- Staffing and staff competencies, licensure, and accreditation requirements.
- Development of specific occupational skills training curriculum standards.
- Program evaluation and outcomes measurement.
- Physical facilities, materials, and supplies.
- Hours of operation.
- Other overhead costs associated with provider status.

Workforce development services aid residents

Center staff develop—through asset mapping activity, research, and ongoing contact with existing public, nonprofit, and private employment and training providers—resource files and a database to help users seeking employment assistance. The Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (www.airs.org) is the professional association for 1,000 community information and referral providers. The Web site houses an online library of downloadable information, reference materials, articles, and follow-along processes and practices.

Job clubs support jobseekers

Another effective way to support the workforce needs of residents is through



peer-driven job clubs. Job clubs are structured, group job searches. The original model had placement rates up to 80 percent. The job club model has been internationally replicated and adapted for various populations. Success stems from the concept that peer support energizes jobseekers as they search for work. For additional references on job clubs, go to www.quintcareers.com/job_club.html.

Workforce development resources

Regardless of how a Neighborhood Networks center supports the workforce aspirations of residents, many resources are available for center staff to assist potential workers to find, obtain, and keep jobs.

The **America Connects Consortium** (www.americacconnects.net) supports the work of community technology centers. A section of their Web site is specifically for workforce development as it pertains to community technology centers and contains articles, assessment tools, and information on career planning.

America's Career InfoNet (www.acinet.org) helps jobseekers and workforce development practitioners to learn about wages and employment trends across industries and occupations; test knowledge, skills, and abilities against the standards for most jobs; search for employer contact information; identify state labor market information; and access external links to additional career resources on the Internet.

America's Job Bank (www.ajb.org) is the largest Internet job bank and one of the most heavily used. Available job listings can be viewed by category by simply inputting a ZIP Code, and jobseekers can post a resume to be viewed by multiple employers.


America's Service Locator (www.servicelocator.org) also helps individuals locate offices that provide information to the

public on finding a job, planning a career, locating training, and dealing with job loss.

The **U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL's) Employment & Training Administration** (www.doleta.gov) provides free services to people looking for work through their One-Stop Centers in communities nationwide. To locate the nearest One-Stop Center, visit www.careeronestop.org. Core services such as job-search and job-placement assistance, career counseling, basic skills and needs assessment, and followup services are available. Dislocated workers can get help at One-Stop Centers to apply for unemployment insurance benefits and learn about job openings, skill requirements, and labor market trends.

Welfare Information Network (www.financeprojectinfo.org/win/) is a clearinghouse for information, policy analysis, and research related to welfare, workforce development, and other human and community services.

Workforce Tools of the Trade—Online Coach (www.workforcetools.org/online_coach.asp) currently offers a guide for using DOL's most commonly used tools to help jobseekers. A Neighborhood Networks online career coach will be forthcoming thanks to a national partnership between Neighborhood Networks and DOL. This coach, tailored to the particular needs of Neighborhood Networks center staff and users, will contain an array of workforce development resources, including career tools already accessible through DOL.

WorkforceUSA.net (www.workforceusa.net) is a Web site designed for the day-to-day needs of workforce development practitioners. This site provides an extensive virtual library of practical tools and materials to support the activities of the workforce development practitioner, such as program design, assessment, training, and education. 

For more information, contact:

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Copies of this fact sheet are available in Spanish and can be requested from the Neighborhood Networks toll-free information center at (888) 312-2743.